Puberty

[841] 881 Menstruation was called paiya'h·n (pai'ya, blood; lit., "to be blooding"). A little ceremony was made for a girl at the termination of her first menses. J.A. recognized her own puberty as neglected due to disrupted native life; however, her mother made "a little party" for her after her first menstrual period. She was washed, and dressed with beads and earrings for the first time. She abstained from meat throughout the ensuing month and for six days of her next period. Then she was washed with a decoction of "some kind of weeds" and was permitted to eat meat. She was informed that to eat meat at this time would cause a hard ball to grow in her abdomen and that, if she attempted to steal meat to eat in secret, she would die. J.A. regretted that she had not been sent out to swim at night as part of her puberty training or taught "to mind her dreams" as she should have been.

Marriage

584 591 A young man went to a girl's house and remained there if she accepted him. For about a year he hunted and helped his father-in-law. Then the couple removed to his parents' home where, if there was room, they remained permanently. The function of the moiety in marriage is discussed under "Social Organization."

582 613 The lineage was primarily a nuclear exogamous group and secondarily, the moiety. Though it was usual to marry without one's moiety it was not compulsory, as is evidenced by the genealogies. No cousin marriage was permitted, and a couple known to be remotely related could not marry without unfavorable comment.

On Tachi marriages and affinal usages Gifford has some remarks.

● [606] The term nukatmin means "my relation." Mother-in-law and father-in-law tabus were in force. There was also a partial tabu against a man talking to the wife of any man he called agas (mother's brother, mother's brother's son, etc.). Cross cousin marriage was not practiced, though it was said that anciently it was and that a man might marry either his mother's brother's daughter or his father's sister's daughter. I have no genealogical evidence to support this statement.

Death

764 [152] The Tachi informant had lost a grandson about a year before my visit and wept when mourning ceremonies were discussed, although the child's mother, one of the interpreters, showed no outward distress. Consequently no information on death or burial was obtained from the Tashi or Chunut informants, beyond the

584 (ma´kši) and the boy's parents had made the betrothal ceremony for the girl, the girl's parents invited the boy in frequently for meals. The boy would then be twelve to fourteen years old. This continued for about a year, or until it was felt that the couple were ready to sleep together.

585 Then a marriage "party" (yew:nu´ša) was made by the girl's family at her home. Two large ceremonial baskets were brought; from water in these the lad and girl were each completely washed by some female member of the spouse's family. They donned new and ornamental clothes. This took place in the morning. A feast, provided by the girl's family, followed. During the day games were played, and in the evening doctors entertained with dancing. Circular dancing (soi´w:ša) and the hand game (we·helaoča) lasted all night. The couple slept together in the girl's home.

589 Marriage was always extra-moiety,[67] but this rule did not permit cross cousins to marry even though they were necessarily of opposite moieties. Lineage relationships on both sides of the family were the prime consideration. E.M. said sometimes cousins had [835] intercourse if the boy had no respect for the girl, but this did not lead to marriage.

595 A man often married two sisters, and "nearly all" men had relations with women in different localities (thus the common parentage of E.M. and B.W.). There was no special term to distinguish wife from mistress, and these concepts were not socially defined in Yokuts culture. Some terms of the marriage relationship are: ·lo´w:t (husband), yi´w:n (wife or any woman one slept with), yaw: ´n:š (to have intercourse), yew:nuša (marriage party or ceremony).[68] During pregnancy a man addressed his [551] wife as ga´lwat. Under normal conditions neither spouse used a vocative term of address or personal names.

● 606 The relations between child and parent-in-law were restricted. A man never went close to or addressed his mother-in-law, and his father-in-law he spoke to only when absolutely necessary. When he did so he used, not the term for "father-in-law" nor the father-in-law's name, but the term ma'ak. The same restrictions and form of address were used by the young wife with respect to her parents-in-law, 607 with the sexes reversed, of course. A man "treated his brother-in-law like a real brother"; they went hunting and fishing together, sharing their catch. A man addressed his sister-in-law "only to make jokes or to tell little stories [or incidents]." The same, reversed, held true [831] for the girl. The nature of these jokes was undefined; E.M. denied that they were specifically obscene.

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[67] There is one exception in the genealogies.

[68] The term also is applied to the modern legal or church ceremony.

591 young man's family. Even after children were born, they would still live in a family home, not their own.

585 When people married there was no ceremony, said J.R., but qualified it with the amendment that sometimes they [which family, both ?] gave a little feast for which deer meat was especially obtained.

582 Some people married within the tribe, some outside, N.W. said. No couple who considered themselves related would marry. Bonds of relationship were equally strong on paternal and maternal sides of a family; the father knew who his relatives were, the mother hers, and prevented their offspring from making mistaken alliances. N.W. categorically stated that relatives never eloped, nor did a girl ever get married "by herself," i.e., without the ramifications of family consent and gifts from the suitor's family.

178 582 Today the young people have marriage connections with relatives that would not have been countenanced in the past [first, second, and third cousin marriage, probably. -- A.H.G.], and often a girl gets married "by herself" without the consent of her family.

582 [616] [587] Moieties, Eagle and Coyote, regulated marriage for the Chukchansi and for the tribes at Friant, said J.R. The levirate was not practiced, he thought; he never knew any man who married his dead brother's wife: "they didn't do that."

586 The informant N.W. stated that there was no divorce, but instantly contradicted herself saying, "If a man is good, and stays with his wife, they stay together always. If they are bad, and want to go away, they don't live together. They can both marry someone else. That was all right." Stepchildren were thought to belong to the second union, not to the first; the spouse who runs away leaves the children behind. If a parent of a stepchild returned and claimed him, the child might recognize the legitimate parent as such and go with him. (This appears to be on the volition of the child rather than on that of either of its biological parents.) When a deserted woman remarried, her children by her first husband behaved toward their stepfather as they would to their actual father.

428 A widow did not inherit her husband's possessions: his things were divided among his children.

606 Parent-in-law taby.---A man never speaks to his mother-in-law, said J.R., or a girl to her father-in-law. If it is absolutely necessary that they converse, a plural form is used. With a parent-in-law of the same sex, speech is permissible but restrained, i.e., conversation is confined to only such speech as is necessary.

525 put the bones in their fists, which they gyrated rapidly, or put behind the back, ending by crossing their arms and holding their fists under each armpit. The guesser, on the opposite team, pointed at his chosen location for the white bone. If the guess was correct, the bones went to uhim (the guesser); if incorrect, one of ten counters was given the holder. When one guess was correct, but the second wrong, the holder became the next guesser. Score was kept by a scorekeeper who held ten counters. The partners first acquiring all ten counters won. Then they rested awhile, put up more stakes, and then began again. A crowd of on-
[606] lookers always stood by, carrying side bets. No moiety opposition was followed, according to J.R., who understood the moiety situation well. M.N. added that there might be several people on each side but only four active players at a
[533] time. There were many songs which these other members of the team sang. The holding side sang to try to confuse the guessers.

526 Shinny.---In this game, said M.N. a ball is hit with sticks toward goal holes about one-half mile apart. The holes are marked with posts. Each side defended its goal. The players stood between the posts. The ball, about 8 inches through, was of skin stuffed with grass.

Shinny variant.---A circular form of shinny was played with one goal hole about three inches in diameter. The ball was a "birch" knot.[139] Players stood in a circle, one side defending the hole, the other attempting to put the ball in it. The sticks were the usual ones of chaparral wood (Ceanothus, manzanita ?).

525 Shell dice game.---A curious game was described by M.N. It was a favorite of old people, especially women. Sand, in which there were a few shells, was filled into a circular tray. Then "two people turned the sand over with their hands. The one that does it best gets the stick (counter)." There are shells in the sand. The score is made according to how the shells fall. The winner would get a prize -- food, money, a nose ornament, or ear plugs with quail feather ornament, etc.

Stave dice.---A flat stick of elderwood, about five by one inches, was thrown with a handful of elderberries onto a flat surface. If the carved side of the stick was uppermost, the thrower won one point; if not, or if the stave was concealed by the berries, nothing was made, and the opponent took the next toss. This game was accompanied by songs.

526 Spear-throwing game.---A screen of boughs ten to fifteen feet high was erected, and on each side, some ten feet in front and behind it,

[824]

[139] The notch (sic) of wood is from a tree growing by the creek; it has white bark, dark slightly roundish green leaves. When the wind blows, the leaves rustle. The bark pulls off horizontally. The tree has dark colored little burrs on every limb. Thrall and interpreter suggest birch; probably sycamore. -- A.H.G.

1: Gayton E-5 (1925-1930) 1948 NS29 Yokuts NS29
[P. 235 9] Western Mono NS25

W Y 582 [587] W Y 584 W Y W 585 431 Y W 606 591 W Y [574]

Marriage

With respect to marriage, S.O. said that no type of cousin marriage was tolerated, but cousins were not "counted" beyond second cousins, sometimes third, depending on propinquity of residence; beyond third it would be "all right to marry." Both the levirate and sororate were common but not compulsory. Usually a spouse waited five or six years before remarrying; "they would die right away if they married too soon."

At Tušao the advances toward a marriage were made by a boy's parents. They talked about it, discussing suitable matches for their son. The girl must not be related in any way: cousins never married. A similar totem animal, however, was no bar to marriage. When a decision had been reached, the boy's parents (or sometimes only the father) would take a present of acorns and visit the girl's parents. They presented the gift, saying that they wanted to be makši (co-parents-in-law) with them and have the girl for a daughter-in-law. After a visit discussing casual affairs, they went home. About six days later (S.O. was not sure how many, "a week maybe") they went back to the girl's home. If their proposal had been accepted, they were given a little feast by the girl's parents. Then the parents consulted their children and, it was said, the couple were usually agreeable. Such arrangements were made when the children were between ten and eighteen years of age, though "a boy wasn't often so old." They did this because "they didn't like to have their children go way off to marry."

When all was settled, the makši exchanged gifts, which might comprise beads, baskets, acorn meal, or skins. There was no gift from the boy's family in excess of those from the girl's, "they were just even." The boy himself did not have to bring any gifts.

The boy slept with the girl in her home for about one week (S.O.). He was "bashful" and did not speak with his parents-in-law. Then the couple went to his home where they could remain if they wished, but more often they soon removed to a home of their own. The choice of residence depended largely on the space available in the boy's home. The girl returned home frequently for short visits, her husband sometimes accompanying her. She gathered seeds from her mother's seed localities. She, too, was bashful and did not talk with her parents-in-law.[373]

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[373] S.O. could give no more specific behavior between children- and parents-in-law. Although he gave some 200 personal names in genealogies, he "could not remember" his mother-in-law's name. Because of his blindness he remained in her home many years after his wife's death; he spoke of these years with her with considerable affection and related a dream pertaining to her.

[P. 235b] Western Mono N525.

Y W 601 The husband was termed loto'pnam (my husband), the wife, or any woman with whom a man had intercourse, yi'wan. There were no changes in these terms after the birth of children.

Y W 595 842 837 While chiefs often had two wives simultaneously in the same home, most men did not. Sterility was the most usual reason for taking a second wife, but sterility was rare. If on the advent of a second wife, the sterile wife "got mad and went home," the man let her go. The majority of spouses, male or female, were not overly concerned if the husband or wife had relations with others.

W Y 602 586 When quarrels arose, the makŭi acted as peacemakers but, if they failed in their attempts to make a reconciliation, they remained on good terms. They did not return any of the prenuptial gifts. A definite divorce was called wai'ŭkŭina. When a husband went off to live with a woman other than his wife, it might be termed katnuŭu'ŭya (quarrelling [husband and wife]).

W Y 606 583 586 591 The Waksachi B.O. said that parent-in-law tabus were not practiced and he laughed at the idea, but his statement is not compatible with opinions of other informants. He also said that a payment was made by a boy's parents to those of the bride, at marriage, but he could not define the amount or procedure. A girl was seldom married against her will, and afterward, "if she couldn't stand it," she went back to her parents, taking her children with her. Residence was usually patrilocal, but the couple had their own house near their parents-in-law.

W Y 582 [548] The Waksachi married among neighboring people to the north, south, and west. But they never married with Eastern Mono, even when a family or two of that group, having come for trading purposes, stayed on the west slope all winter. The reason, B.O. said, was "that they didn't want the yo'otc coming over here to stay."[174] The only trans-Sierra marriage B.O. knew of was that of X's son who got into trouble stealing horses, fled across the mountains, and settled there.

W Y [186] B.O. corroborated S.O.'s statement that persons with the same totemic animal could marry, but said that cousins, even second or third, could not marry. A man seldom had more than one wife, but B.O. thought "people to the north" had three or four. He cited M.L.'s stepfather (Wukchumni) as a man with two wives. There also was a Yaudanchi doctor who had two wives; they were not sisters. He thought the Wukchumni had plural wives more often than the Waksachi. The sororate and levirate were commonly practiced by the Waksachi, but were not obligatory.

Y W [587]

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[174] This sentiment is amusing since the Western Mono presumably came from the same source, evidently not many generations back, and probably by the same filtering process.

1: Gayton E-5 (1925-1930) 1948 NS29 Yokuts NS29

[P. 240b] Western Mono WS25

dreams that his mother-in-law is there too.[179] When people dreamed of someone in this casual manner (i.e., not a "power" dream), they might speak of it to each other, saying, for example, "I saw your brother" (uhe'wia nü u'bunɨt, Waksachi).

Significant or "power" dreams were told only to the most intimate friends, usually only to one who was also seeking tɨpni. There was no formal prohibition on disclosing them; rather it was a matter of wisdom and good taste not to talk of, and particularly not to brag of, one's supernatural power.[180] Other people were aware, of course, of a seeker's activities and knew that he was by way of being a doctor. A man was usually thirty to forty years old before he felt that he knew enough to cure as a professional shaman. It was often through the intimate acquaintance of two friends who knew of each other's supernatural experiences that a budding shaman secured his first patient.

Thus, a man who had a sick child might be too poor to pay a high fee or might be distrustful of established shamans. The intimate friend of the novice would suggest to the father that he let So-and-So try, that he knew he had much power. Or the father himself might be aware of the young man's efforts and want to try him. Whichever the circumstance, the father would approach the young man with a sum of money (less than would be offered a professional practitioner) and ask him to come try to cure his child. If the novice felt he had enough power to attempt it, he would do so; if not, there was no compulsion for him to agree. He would be likely to refuse unless confident of success, as failure always laid a doctor's motives open to suspicion, especially repeated failures. A young doctor, like an old one, was entitled to keep the fee whether the cure succeeded or not, and was often given additional presents of baskets or blankets, if successful.

However, the novice must begin sometime and, if he accepted the fee, would go and do his best. His talismans would be those indicated by his dreams, and his methods of curing would be sucking, blowing, and rubbing, as with all doctors. If the patient recovered, he was recommended to others and so little by little set up a practice, so to say. He continued his training procedure, for always he must recempower his used talismans, and an accumulation of power was not only desirable but indispensable when he became sufficiently successful to attract attention as a possible rival to older shamans. An initial failure to cure usually led to redoubled efforts to seek power; but

[179] Although S.O. insisted that there was no mother-in-law tabu in his society, it is worthy of remark that he "could not remember" his mother-in-law's name in spite of the fact that his genealogical memory carried over 200 names and his dreams of the woman were cordial.

[180] A story pointing a moral against bragging of one's power appears in Gayton and Newman, 37.

2: Kroeber E-5 (ca. 1918) 1953
NS29 Yokuts NS29

strated vigorously, would probably soon depart of his own accord. 584
If a marriage took place, the husband lived with his wife's people. 591
This is rather remarkable in view of the fact that most and probably 611
all the Yokuts reckoned descent paternally with reference to exogamy and totemism. As usual in loosely organized society, polygamy 595
was not considered objectionable, but was not the common fortune of men and women, probably because there was no noteworthy excess of females. A man with several wives seems normally to have been married in as many villages, dividing his time between his various households. Kindred of any known degree of relationship, except 582
perhaps one class of cousins, were ineligible to marriage; and, what is more interesting, accidental namesakes as well. The Yokuts state that people of the same tribe and town could marry, and this is confirmed by the parentage of old living Indians; but the vast majority of such specific records reveal marriages between people not of the same tribe. This habit is the more peculiar because the dialects of the tribes always differed somewhat; at the same time, the practice must have been a factor of some influence in preventing the rapid drifting apart of the idioms. Naturally, many of the Yokuts were [191]
bilingual; and persons knowing three or four dialects, or even distinct languages, are not rare.

Children-in-law and parents-in-law exhibit mutual shame. They 606
avoid speaking, though inmates of the same house; walk apart; and do not even approach each other unless it is absolutely necessary.

MOIETIES AND TOTEMS.

In addition to the politically exogamic tendency, there was a strict 582
rule requiring a man to marry outside his own inherited social divi- 616
sion. These divisions were two, and certain animals were symbolically associated with each and transmitted from father to child and son's [611]
child. In other words, the totemic moiety system of the Miwok extends also to the Yokuts. It has been found among hill and valley 616
tribes from the Chukchansi to the Wowol. Only the Yaudanchi and [184]
Yauelmani, and with them no doubt some of their immediate neighbors, did not possess the organization. For the extinct valley tribes north of the Fresno River there are no data, but their associations with their own kinsmen to the south, as well as with the upland Miwok, render it extremely probable that the same scheme prevailed among most if not all of them. In fact, the existence of a similar organization among the Mono on the east and probably among the Salinan Indians to the west, together with the reappearance of exogamous moieties in southern California, place the Yokuts more centrally than the Miwok as regards the known distribution of this so-

3: Latta-Y-5 (1923-1948)1949 NS29 Yokuts NS29

600 It is surprising to most persons that the life of the Indians was so complex. It requires volumes to recount the many details of their life regarding the securing and preparing of food stuffs, wearing apparel and the multitudinous materials utilized by them. Even at the present time the surviving full-
824 blood Yokuts Indians will be found to have within their houses in addition to the food stuffs known and used by us, many additional seeds, plants, roots, herbs and other materials. It is impossible to attempt to cover all of these things in detail.

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW PROBLEM

●606 Probably the most interesting convention of the Yokuts was
591 their custom concerning the relationship between the mother-in-law and son-in-law. When the young Yokuts man married, it was in some tribes customary for him to go to live with the parents of the bride for a period of time approximating one year. During this time he helped with the hunting and other arts and pastimes and shared the responsibilities of the head of the house. Out of this practice there developed a problem which civilized people only too well understand and which led to the mother-in-law taboo. Among tribes where this practice was common, it became customary for the son-in-law never to speak to the mother-in-law and for the mother-in-law never to speak to the son-in-law.

There was no ill feeling between the two because of this. It was simply a necessary custom, and they conformed to that custom religiously. It is said that in some tribes the mother-in-law, upon meeting the son-in-law, would turn to one side and cover her face. This probably represents the custom at its extreme practice. Among some tribes no taboo of any kind was known.

As the period of sojourn with the bride's parents was over, the young couple removed to a distance varying from a few yards to a half mile or more, as the experience of the past year would seem to dictate, and built for themselves a home.

606 The following experience was related by a man who worked
574 for many years among the Yokuts. He had traveled many miles in the heat of summer to visit a Yokuts basket maker on one of the Sierra streams. Upon arrival at her little shack, after a walk of several miles from the end of the road, he found that she was gone upon a long trip for the purpose of gathering roots and other materials for basketry. At home were the husband and an elderly lady, who was a stranger to the visitor.

3: Latta Y-5 (1923-1948)1949 NS29 Yokuts NS29

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Upon learning that the basket maker was gone, the caller decided to return to his car, but being quite thirsty, asked for a drink of water. This immediately created for the host a real problem. There was no water in the house. It was approximately one-fourth mile to the spring. He could not very well leave his guest there while he went to bring water. Neither did he consider it hospitable to tell his guest to go after it. The elderly lady was his mother-in-law. She could not understand the English conversation, and he could not talk to her at all in any language.

After studying for a moment, he walked out of the house. Standing quite close to the wall near where the mother-in-law sat, he placed his hands to his mouth, and in a very moderate tone, called in the Indian language to his wife, who was from two to three miles up the canyon, "Mary, come and bring the white man a drink of water." Then he immediately came back in the house, sat down and began to entertain his guest.

The mother-in-law immediately arose, picked up a bucket and, as her son-in-law had intended that she should, brought water from the spring.

[p.10-A]

538 is betrayed, but to her pregnancy as a consequence of the betrayal. The "confession feast," the ritualistic recounting of an exotic experience, climaxes the Orpheus tales (abstracts 139-153).

●[606] The rôle of parents-in-law as mediators in domestic quarrels is indicated in the Pleiades tales (tales 15, 33).

[525 526] The great gambling game, particularly for spectacular rivalry, was shinny. Of secondary importance, arrow shooting, lance throwing, racing, and the hand-game are mentioned as forms of contests.

[171] Hunting adventures and exploits, which are frequent in stories from the Basin, are ignored, as are almost all mundane occupations. The eating of clover and wild onions (tales 14, 15, 33, [262] 36; abstract 57), and seed gathering (p. 1; abstract 114) are spoken of, but rarely.

[576] Custom required one to call out when approaching a house. To draw near unannounced would arouse suspicion (mentioned in an abstracted text).

538 The sacred quality of tobacco is brought out 778 by Falcon's exclusive use of it as food and occasional references to its usage for accomplish[276] ing some superhuman task (tales 31, 34, 39; abstract 92). The common sacred talisman, a strand of eagle down, is mentioned (tales 33, 34, 53).

[533] Contact with one's supernatural power or guardian spirit through song is indicated in a few tales (tales 26, 43, 46).

538 It is not rewarding to recount further the incidents of culture in the stories: this résumé indicates the general nature of the cultural features exhibited.

Formalized structure of the tales is not always followed. The most common opening of a Yokuts story is with a statement: "People were living there" (ṭaw xo·xo·hin mani' yokots) or "So-and-so was there" or "So-and-so was going along." Western Mono myths more often refer to [171] the time rather than the place, saying, "In olden times" or "Long ago" (manati· co'in) before taking up the action.

Closing phrases are not necessary. A few of Newman's texts end with "That is the end" or my own, taken in English, with "And that's all." But there is no indication of the "tying up" of a story reported for some people or a "call for an early spring." [784] The taboo on summer storytelling was known but thought of as unimportant, or as a logical consequence of habits rather than as a taboo at all. All of Newman's texts were recorded in the summer. My Michahai informant said that people naturally told stories in the winter evenings, in the summer young people stayed outside and played. According to the same [574] informant, any visitor in a house might tell stories or adventures. Boys and girls would ask for them if they dared, or hoped that conversation would evoke such recountings. Adolescent [563] Michahai would go to a well-known storyteller's